

DECONTAMINATION SYSTEM FOR MAIL AND OTHER ARTICLES

Abstract of the Disclosure

A system for handling items (10) such as mail includes an enclosure (25), which is capable of being isolated from the surrounding environment and from a chamber (27) of a decontamination system (22) fluidly connected therewith. The enclosure includes an opening (42) sized for receiving a container (14) containing potentially contaminated items, such as incoming mail. Manipulators (44) allow the mail to be sorted in the enclosure without risk of contaminating an operator or the surrounding environment. Mail to be decontaminated is conveyed between the enclosure and the chamber while being isolated from the surrounding environment. Vapor hydrogen peroxide or other decontaminant gas is used to decontaminate the enclosure, container, and any residual mail in the enclosure which is determined to be unsuited for ethylene oxide processing.